



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Special General Meeting, July 11th, 1870.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, BART., K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

Seventy-five Fellows of the Society were present.

THE President opened the Meeting by briefly explaining the nature of the business for which it was convened. He said it was to obtain the sanction of the Fellows of the Society to the purchase of a large Freehold House, No. 1, Savile Row, for the accommodation of the Map-collection, Library, and offices. The Council had come to an unanimous conclusion that this purchase should be made; the house having nearly twice the amount of accommodation of the premises at present occupied by the Society, and the opportunity of acquiring a freehold in so central a position being of very rare occurrence. With some alterations, the house might be made sufficient for all their wants. It was a great advantage in the situation that it was close to the building recently erected for the University of London, in the great Theatre of which they expected, subject to the annual permission of the Senate, to hold their Meetings. The Society possessed funded property to the amount of about 20,000*l.*, and could well afford the purchase. It would be good economy to take this step, as the lease of the present house in Whitehall-place would expire in September, 1871, and it was expected the rent would then be advanced by 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year; besides which, extensive alterations would be necessary to adapt it to the increased requirements of the Society, and money thereby spent on property which, after all, was not their own. During several years past, the Council, in anticipation of the expiration of the lease of the Society's house, had made repeated applications to her Majesty's Government to grant them a house, or a site on which to build one, but without result. The last of these applications was made in the strongest manner by himself to the Prime Minister, who had expressed to him (the President) his sense of the public importance of the Society, and its intimate relations with various Government offices, but the answer he received was unfavourable. It was this failure of expectation of Government assistance which had compelled the Council to act on their own resources. Mr. James Fergusson, who had taken an active part in the business, would explain the advantages of the house to the Meeting.

MR. C. R. MARKHAM, Secretary, read the Rules appertaining to General Meetings ('Charter and Regulations,' Chap. V., Section 2').

THE PRESIDENT stated that the Rules had been complied with, in so far

that the circulars convening the Meeting had been posted to all the Fellows resident in the United Kingdom more than a week before the date of the Meeting; and there were far more than the required quorum present.

MR. JAMES FERGUSON rose to propose the Resolution concerning the purchase. He said that, having been a member of the Council for many years past, and having last year held office on the Board of Works, the subject of the future accommodation of the Society had been continually before him; and he felt, from the knowledge he had of the position of the Government, and the land they had to dispose of, that it was perfectly hopeless to expect any assistance in this matter from that quarter. They had, in fact, no site to give them, and were very unwilling to propose a grant of money with which to purchase one. The Council had, therefore, no alternative but to trust to their own resources, and look for some place to remove to on the expiration of the lease of their present house in September next year. The Building Committee of the Council were therefore instructed to take the necessary steps, and after examining every large house obtainable in a central situation in London, they came to the conclusion that the only one that could be considered suitable was this house, No. 1, Savile Row. The Council had, therefore, made a provisional arrangement with the proprietor to purchase it for 14,400*l*. This was done the week before last. Since then an architect and a builder had been employed to go over the house and sketch out a plan of necessary alterations, which had been submitted to the Council, and the result of their examination was, in the first place, that a Map-room could be arranged, about 60 feet in each direction, though not exactly square. This room would afford about double our present accommodation for maps. The first floor of the house it was intended should be devoted to the Library, together with a gallery round the Map-room 12 feet from the floor; this would give space for books about double that of the present Library. The library increases at the rate of about 1000 volumes *per annum*, and in their present house there was not room for one more year's increase. The house was singularly well situated for the Society, and its price not exorbitant. The new Map-room and other structural alterations would cost, according to the estimate of the architect, about 1600*l*., and, putting down 1000*l*. for new furniture and for removing, the total outlay would be about 17,000*l*. We should be just enabled to make the necessary alterations before our present lease expired. The interest we obtain for the 17,000*l*. it is thus proposed to expend is 550*l*., and the rent of the house—if we stay where we are—would be at least 600*l*., besides a considerable outlay for alterations; so that altogether we should save income by the proposed purchase. For these reasons, he, Mr. Fergusson, had no doubt of the expediency and advantages of the Society acquiring the freehold property. He would beg leave to move:—

“That the Council be empowered to expend the sum of 14,400*l*. in the purchase of the freehold house, No. 1, Savile Row, for the Society; and also a further sum, not exceeding 3000*l*., in building a Map-room at the rear of the building, and in adapting the house for occupation by the Society.”

LORD HOUGHTON, as a Trustee of the Society, seconded the Resolution.

SIR HARRY VERNEY, M.P., spoke in favour of the Resolution. He was well acquainted with the house, which was one of the old-fashioned and strongly-built residences, as well built as any house in London. Its proximity to the magnificent Hall of the University of London, to which Sir Roderick Murchison referred, was a great advantage.

DR. E. BLORE asked what guarantee the Council had for the permanent use of the Hall of the University for their evening meetings, and whether they had the means of building a room for the meetings or the site about to be purchased?

The PRESIDENT replied that he had already stated the conditions on which the Society would have the use of the great Hall of the London University. These were similar to those on which we had the use of the large Hall of Burlington House, now destroyed, when we trusted to the London University and the Royal Society, who always gave the permission from year to year.

Mr. FERGUSSON stated that accommodation might be found for meetings in their own building, as the Map-room to be built at the rear of the house would be capable, with a little fitting and arrangement, of seating 300 people, which was about as large a number as attended our meetings on ordinary occasions. All that would be required was that the map-cases should be fitted with castors; with this and the purchase of chairs, that number of people could meet in the room.

Captain SHERARD OSBORN, R.N., also spoke in favour of the Resolution. He thanked the President and the Council for their care and foresight in obtaining this building just before the expiration of the lease of the old house. As a naval officer, and, like many other members of the Society, liable to be called by duty to distant parts of the world, he thought it most important that the Royal Geographical society should have a fixed place of abode, its own property, to which its numerous members might address themselves from all parts of the earth. He was glad that it had been determined to go no longer, hat in hand, to any Government, asking for a place. It was not a dignified position for a Society which occupies so large a place in public estimation.

The PRESIDENT then put the Resolution to the Meeting, and, on a show of hands, declared that it was passed unanimously.

In conclusion, he expressed the great gratification he felt at this unanimous vote of a General Meeting, because it testified—and this was, above all things, pleasing for a President to see—that the Council was in perfect harmony with the Society at large. The establishment of the Society in a freehold building of its own would give us the assurance of permanent existence, and it would give us additional encouragement to grant money for the equipment of expeditions; for the accumulation of funded property during later years had had for its chief object the purchase of a house, and this being at length accomplished their surplus funds would be entirely available for the exploration of distant parts of the earth.

A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Charles White, the Member of Council who had conducted the negotiations preparatory to the purchase of the House, brought the proceedings to a close.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

(Printed by order of Council.)

1. *Notes on the Province of Tanibé, Madagascar.* By the Rev.
JOHN HOLDING.

Position and Boundaries.—The island of Madagascar is divided into twenty-two provinces, of which *Tanibé* is one. The literal meaning of the word is “great land,” and is thus derived:—*Tany*, land; *bé*, great. (The *y* in the